

A Quick Guide to the GRE

This resource includes a list of learning tools to help you study for the GRE.
Recommendations from those who have successfully completed the GRE are also included.

What is the GRE?

The GRE stands for Graduate Record Examination and is a standardized test that is a requirement for admission to many graduate programs at universities across North America. [Here](#) is the official website for the test.

What is the format of the test?

There are 3 sections

- Analytical Writing
- Verbal Reasoning
- Quantitative Reasoning

How long does the test take to complete?

The test takes 3 hours and 45 minutes.

When should I start studying for the test?

This varies depending on the student. Most students choose to spend several months preparing for the test.

When should I take the test?

Most students aim to take the test in the penultimate year of their undergraduate studies. Make sure to give yourself adequate time to prepare for the test and plan for the possibility that you may want to retake the test.

What is a “good score”?

This depends on the school/program you’re interested in. You should check the admissions criteria for the schools you are planning to apply to in order to see the range of scores they usually accept. You can find performance statistics (includes percentile ranks) from individuals who took the test between 2016-2019 [here](#).

What resources are available to help me prepare for the test?

General Resources

- [Official Educational Testing Service \(ETS\) GRE Resources](#)
- [Kaplan GRE Prep](#)
 - [Free Full-Length Online Practice Test](#)
- [Princeton Review](#)
 - [Free Online Practice Test](#)
- [Manhattan Prep](#)
 - [YouTube Channel](#)
- [Greg Mat YouTube Channel](#)

Analytical Writing

- [ETS Pool of Issue Essay topics](#)
- [ETS Pool of Argument Essay topics](#)
- [Greg MAT: Writing the GRE Issue Essay Step-by-Step](#)
- [Greg MAT: Writing the GRE Argument Essay Step-by-Step](#)

Verbal Reasoning

- [Repeat Offenders Vocab List](#)
- [Magoosh Vocab Flashcard Deck](#)
- [Kaplan Verbal Quiz \(10 questions\)](#)
- [Magoosh Verbal Quiz \(27 questions\)](#)

Quantitative Reasoning

- [Kaplan Quant Quiz \(10 questions\)](#)
- [Magoosh Quant Quiz \(15 questions\)](#)
- [Princeton Review Quant Quiz \(6 questions\)](#)

Where can I take the test?

You can find information regarding testing centers and dates [here](#).

How much does it cost?

This depends on where you are in the world. If you are taking the test in the US, it costs \$205 USD. See the costs depending on location [here](#) (Note that this webpage also includes information about the fees for the official ETS test prep resources). ETS also offers financial aid for students. Click [here](#) to determine if you're eligible.

How long are the scores valid for?

GRE test scores are valid for 5 years.

How often can I take the test?

You can take the GRE every 21 days and up to 5 times within a consecutive 12 month period.

Should I take the test multiple times?

This will depend on your motivation, goals, previous scores, the amount of time you have, etc. Students who are unsatisfied with their initial score often choose to retake the test if they have the time and resources available to do so.

Words of Wisdom

Here are some helpful tips from individuals who have taken the GRE.

“Practice! I took one practice test early on just to see how things were and then took the rest after finishing the bulk of my studying. The first practice test I took was by Kaplan. It was helpful for understanding the GRE format and general interface, but I’m not sure how accurate it was in terms of content/difficulty, especially for the verbal section. In general, doing practice tests will help you get a better understanding of how to pace yourself. I bought a Manhattan Prep book where they gave you 5 practice online tests and I think that was the most helpful (really accurate to what my actual scores ended up being). I think their quantitative section was much better than their verbal section though. I also recommend reading *New York Times* and *Scientific American* articles to help improve your vocabulary. Lastly, when you go to take the test, the testing proctors will check to make sure you don’t have any items on you that may allow you to cheat. In order to make the check-in process go faster, I recommend not wearing any accessories.”

“I used the Kaplan GRE Prep Plus book for studying and really enjoyed it. It contains many practice tests, online resources, and plenty of sample problems. Additionally, search Quizlet for GRE Vocabulary Flash Cards, as there are many existing decks with hundreds of challenging vocabulary words. I prepped over the course of about two months, which was okay for intensive studying. However, if I could do it again, I would prefer studying over a longer period of time less intensively.”